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INFORMATION REPORT

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Abrud (Transylvania)

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1. Abrud is a gold-mining town where prisoners are used as laborers to-
gether with regular workers. Between fifty and sixty prisoners were
brought daily to Abrud on suspicion of possessing hard currency, gold
or jewels in Rumania or abroad. Here they were first taken to the
office of the Securitate for questioning.
2. In the Securitate they are led into a large hall and ordered to stand
facing the wall. Sometimes they are kept in this position for as
long as two or three days unless they reveal where their property is
hidden. If they do not confess then they are threatened with the
"freezing" chambers. These are cellars where prisoners are subjected
to cold until they confess. Those who faint while standing have water
poured on their faces, and when they recover the interrogation is begun
anew. At Abrud, no one is beaten.
3. Those few who do not "break" are taken to the Securitate in Bucharest,
which has a reputation for severe maltreatment of suspects. Trials are
conducted by a Major Iosif, formerly head of the Securitate at Oradea.
Iosif informed prisoners that their denials were a waste of time as
they would not be released unless they handed over their money. The
majority of the persons interrogated in this fashion were persons sus-
pected of dealing in jewels or currency. Most of them confessed and
surrendered their property.

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